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Montana State Fund Guardian

May 1998

1998 Customer Satisfaction Survey

This year's survey was mailed in April to 3,215 State Fund policyholders. A random selection of 3,000 policyholders with premium less than $25,000 received the survey, in addition to all policyholders with premium greater than $25,000. Five hundred and two policyholders responded (15.61% return). 1998 is the fourth consecutive year the survey has been conducted

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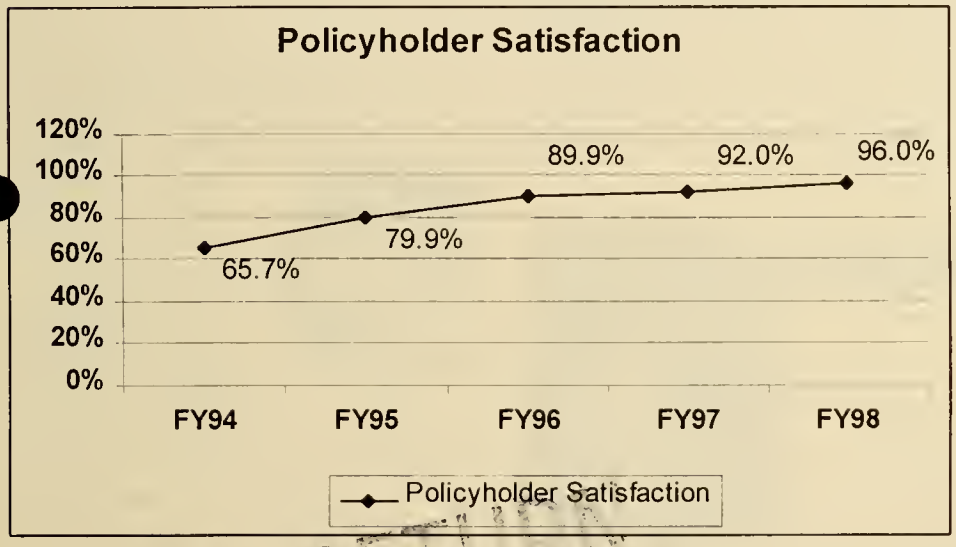

General Satisfaction:
96% were satisfied or very satisfied with the State Fund.

Customer Service Unit:
98% were satisfied or very satisfied with the Customer Service Unit.

Policy Services:
96% were satisfied or very satisfied with overall Policy Services.

Loss Control:
97% were satisfied or very satisfied with overall Loss Control.

Premium Audit:
96% were satisfied or very satisfied with Premium Audit.

Claim Services:
95% were satisfied or very satisfied with Claim Services.

PLEASE RETURN

Customer Comments

"Reporting wages doesn't confuse me, but figuring the premium always has. Could be me, but your staff is *always* helpful."

"A lot better than the hassle we had before!"

"I am very pleased with the competence and helpfulness of the phone staff. I do not hesitate to call with my questions."

"I would like calendar year reporting instead of Fiscal Year."

"We appreciate the opportunity to get a discount through the Montana Stockgrower's Association."

"Your progress toward eliminating the Old Fund Liability is extremely important, particularly to those of us who had absolutely nothing to do with its inception in the distant past. Congratulations."

Published monthly by and for the employees of the Montana State Fund.

President's Message

. . .muscle-building continues to drive and strengthen our organization. . .

We are constantly assessing what we do, how we do it, and how effectively we meet the needs of our customers. We strive to ensure our efforts provide meaningful benefits to employees, insurance producers, customers, and injured workers. As necessary, various departments and areas of our operations are changed to enable the State Fund to remain viable and competitive. Given our recent announcement of organizational changes, muscle-building continues to drive and strengthen our organization to better enable us to compete effectively, remain an industry leader, and develop the necessary organizational depth.

Also toward that goal, State Fund management has been envisioning our future and developing a strategic business plan to meet these challenges head-on. Our approach this year struck an improved balance between strategy development and strategy implementation. In addition, we focused more on our future needs compared with our daily business operations. I am delighted to report the *nearly* completed plan is a valuable map of our future and will be shared with all employees soon. In July, we will have an all employee event to conclude our fiscal year 1998 strategic business plan accomplishments and kick off our fiscal year 1999 plan. More details on this later.

Given this is Aidan's final edition of the Guardian, I want to acknowledge her for the many contributions she has made to the State Fund and wish her the best in her future endeavors. I will miss her creative ideas and efforts to communicate important, and sometimes just fun, ideas of interest to us all. Good luck Aidan!

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to **Randal Merrick**, April's Employee of the Month. As Senior Programmer Analyst in the MIS Department, Randy works to create and improve many programs. And, according to a coworker, he put in extra effort to fix one particular program for the Underwriting Department.

The construction premium credit program is just one of the programs available to State Fund policyholders. The program was created by a State Fund employee, and worked fine for a few years—until the individual who created it left the MIS Department. Ever since, the Underwriting Department has had nothing but agony every year with the program. It is critical that this software work correctly in order to properly qualify policyholders to participate. In addition, the projected results of the program are considered in our ratemaking process each year.

Randy went to extraordinary lengths to research and fix the multiple problems with the software. Even with no user manuals and no one in the building who understands the software, Randy determined how to repair the various problems that were uncovered.

Randy's coworker's explain, "Randy does an excellent job of listening to his customer so he clearly understands the problem. He then moves forward and fixes it! He is also very pleasant and fun to work with."

Thanks Randy, for your hard work to resolve the problems on this critical program!

Kudos Kolumn

Ron Hovick from Emmanuel Lutheran Church complimented **Judy Russell** and **Carla Irby** on their professionalism and understanding in taking a claim over the phone. He said a claim for him is an unpleasant situation, but these two people were "very kind and professional in every way." He added that it was a pleasure to know we have such a competent staff.

Mike Oestrich from Double O Enterprises called in for several certificates. He spoke with **Karen Kay Wegner** and was very pleased with the "good service" she provided.

Summer Fun

The State Fund Golf Tournament is set for Friday, June 5th. Teams of four people (make your own teams) will play an 18-hole scramble. Tee times start at 12:30 and the cost is $19.75 ($10.00 per seat for a gas cart - optional). You may use a season pass or punchcard if you have one. Family members/significant others are welcome. Please pay Dave Miller by 4:30, June 2nd.

25 Years

The Governor's Cup race turns 25 this year. In addition to a 5K, 10K, and 20K, the Governor's Cup claims the only marathon held in Montana. The race has evolved into a great family event that includes music, food, and fun. The race will be held on June 6.

AMPS/PAALS Update

Both core teams are busy at work on systems training. This training is hands-on and directed specifically at preparing all participants for the user acceptance testing phase. Currently, our vendor, IE, is still anticipating delivery of the major pieces on June 1st so we can begin user acceptance testing. IE will continue to work on additional functionality during this phase, but we continue to plan implementation for October. Each phase of this project is very tight and we appreciate the extra hours and hard work of those involved.

New Employees

Maureen LaChere is the new Underwriting Administrative Assistant. Maureen previously worked at Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Family Outreach, Catholic Social Services, and the Helena Chamber of Commerce. Maureen is married and has three children: Gerald, 17; Linda, 14; and Lisa, 13.

Tracy Johnston recently started as the HR Assistant. Before joining the State Fund, she worked at Intermountain Children's home for seven years. Tracy is married and has four children. She is a volunteer fire fighter, EMT, and loves the outdoors.

Karen Beddow, Customer Service Representative previously worked at the Department of Insurance in licensing and continuing education. She earned a degree from Montana State University. Karen is a native Montanan and moved to Helena in 1985.

Training Calendar

Coping with Change: June 16, 10am-3pm

Quality Customer Service: June 23-24, 10am-12pm

Human Resources

Personnel changes as of May 22, 1998

New Hires

Maureen LaChere, Underwriting
Tony DeVito, MIS

Departures

Paula Lavender, Claim
Tina Klineschmidt, Claim
Aidan Myhre, Executive

Survey results continued from page 1.

and this year's results continued to show wonderful improvement! Given this year's repeated improvement, we took a careful look at the responses to verify the credibility of this positive trend. Although there are a number of reasons why some customers choose to return a survey and others not, the important point is that our survey rate of return is consistent; therefore the trend of positive improvement indicates that similiar numbers of people are reporting improvements in our service.

More Customer Satisfaction Survey charts on page 4.

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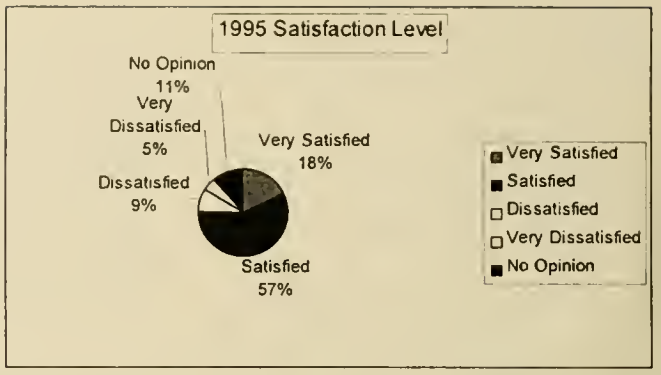
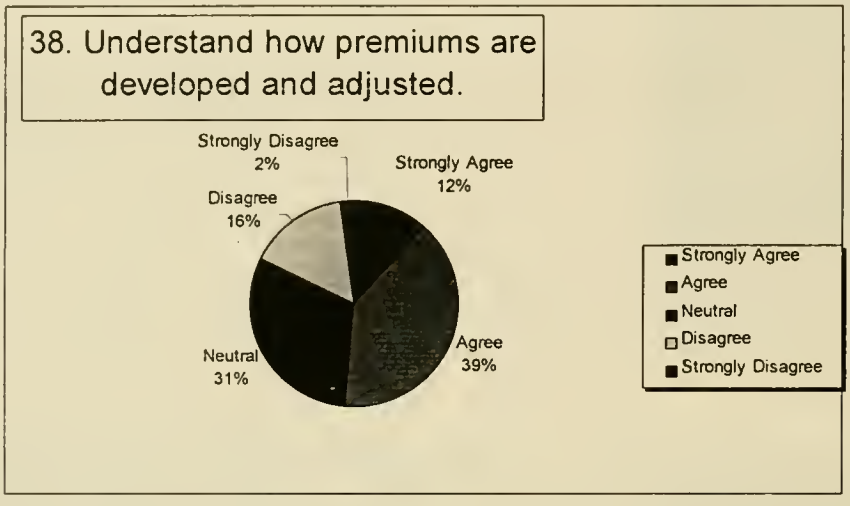


Satisfaction with the State Fund continues to improve. In 1995, 75% of policyholders were satisfied or very satisfied with the State Fund. In 1998, 96% of policyholders are satisfied or very satisfied with the State Fund.



Editor: Aidan Myhre
Managing Editor: Shannon Copps
Employee Reporters:
Kathy Rowsey Karen Wegner
Charlie Adams Jay Phillips

Please call 444-6502 with comments or suggested articles.

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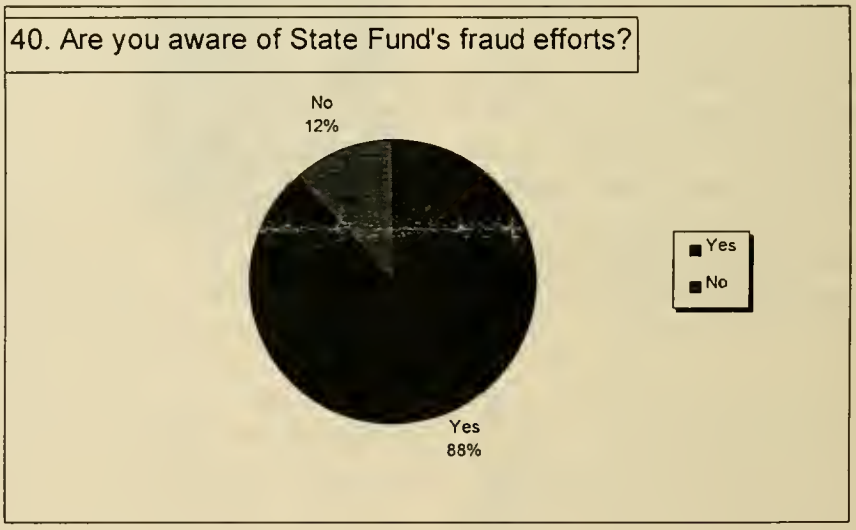

A new question on this year's survey asked customers their awareness of the State Fund's fraud efforts. This question establishes an important benchmark to measure increased awareness of our fraud program through advertising, media relations, etc.